

## Today.

Thy yesterday is dead,  
Unborn is thy tomorrow;  
Why look before with dread?  
Why gaze behind with sorrow?  
Unchanged the past must stand,  
Deaf to thy prayers and tears,  
And, hidden in God's hand,  
Rest all thy future years.  
Today is thine—today!  
But, ah, its hours, how brief!  
For time makes no delay  
For doubt or fear or grief.  
Speed, speed thy laggard feet!  
Follow thy King's behest!  
So shall thy past be sweet,  
The future glad and blest.

—CHRISTIAN WEEKLY.

## Reviving Churches.

I have been asked, "How can a church that is small or in low state, be built up, revived from its depression?"

## I. There must be a preparation of the heart.

"Break up the fallow ground, and sow not among thorns" saith the Lord. Every local body or church has within it some evils which need to be removed. When Christ's special presence is withdrawn they have provoked him by their sins. The message from Zion's King to such is, "Cast ye up, cast ye up, take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people." The sins of broken vows, of worldly conformity, of idolatrous pursuits of wealth, of contention, etc., must be repented of, with deep humiliation before God.

## II. The church should be urged to cultivate a spirit of prayer and supplication.

The spirit of God has been poured out upon the members of His church previous to any extraordinary visits of mercy. This was true under the national reformation by Josiah. Also it preceded the change effected by the ministry of Ezra. A continued season of prayer preceded the great revival on the Pentecost.

## III. The church should cultivate a spirit of love and living piety.

The Lord's people ought to exhibit much of the life of religion—less worldly-mindedness, and more attachment to God's house—holy order enkindled—unconquerable attachment to the Gospel of Christ—filled with the Holy Ghost and faith.

## IV. Plain preaching is essentially necessary.

In order to make a good sermon, the exordium should correspond with the subject on which we are about to treat. Is not my word as a fire and a hammer that breaketh the rocks in pieces. Preaching must be plain, affectionate, direct, and in season. See Peter's sermon on the Pentecost. He thrust the charge of murder into their bosom, which pierced like a barbed arrow from the quiver of the Almighty. Sermons should exhibit the purity, and extent, and righteous sanctions of the law—the deep corruption and alienation of the heart by nature—the work of the spirit, justification by faith, and the duty of immediate repentance and love.

## V. We need protracted meetings for public worship.

Nehemiah, revived protracted meetings which the Jews from the commencement of their polity held. It is like blending a number of Sabbath's into immediate succession—the heart is kept fixed on the blessed Christ—the cross of Christ is exhibited so constantly, that its subduing influence is felt, and the sinner is constrained to cry out, "What must I do to be saved?"

## VI. Another means is pastoral visitation.

In this way very much good may be done—them that feared the Lord often met and spake one to another and the Lord heard them and a Book of remembrance was kept—the minister may aid in deepening impressions, in following up the melting and the dissolving process, in encouraging and strengthening the weak and timid, etc.

## VII. Secret or closet prayer.

How important, how necessary—cultivate it, exercise it, watch, pray without ceasing, etc. Christ himself set us an example of it, Luke 6:12; and it has been the practice of the saints in every age. There are some particular occasions when this

duty may be practiced to advantage as when we are entering into any important situation, undertaking anything of consequence, when calamities surround us, or when ease and prosperity attend us. Closet prayer is calculated to inspire us with peace, defend us from our spiritual enemies excite us to obedience and promote our real happiness. We should be careful that the stupidity of our minds, the intrusion of company, the cares of the world, or the indulgence of sensual objects prevent us from the constant exercise of this important duty. There is family prayer, another part not to be neglected. It was the practice of our fathers: Abraham, Gen. 18:19, David, Solomon, Acts 10:2-30. If we consider what a blessing it is likely to prove to our children and domestics, what a comfort it must be to ourselves, what utility it may prove to the community at large, how it sanctifies domestic comfort and crosses, and what a tendency it has to promote order, sobriety, and religion in general, we must at once see the propriety of attending to it. As to the season for family prayer every family must determine for itself. But before breakfast, every morning, and before retiring to bed at night seemes the most proper time to me.

Have we not slept long enough over the interests of Zion? Are not sinners hastening rapidly to ruin? Is it not high time to awake out of sleep? By all that is desirable in the salvation of souls, by all that is binding in God's Word, by the love of the spirit, I beseech one and all strive together in fervent prayer for the advancing of the work of God. Dear friends time is short, the whole measure of earthly history will be short, from the creation to the destruction. Generation after generation is passing away like the morning shadows. The Word of God compared with the history of passing events, fully indicates that earth's great drama is hastening to a crisis. Time has grown old; six thousand years encircle its brow, and with inconceivable velocity it is rushing on to its eternal sepulchre. And soon the end will come, the great event connected with the winding up of all earthly affairs, the rendering of the last account cannot be far distant. The earth wrapped in flames, the heavens bleached and pale with terror fleeing away, the opening of the Book of remembrance in which all our good and evil deeds are recorded, are but a step before us.

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## Immortality.

BY J. B. LAIR.

Having cut loose from traditions, creeds and former teachings, and have gone to reading and studying the Scriptures for myself, regardless of preconceived notions, I find some things now in the Scripture so different to the general teaching, that I am almost at a loss to know what to do with them. However I need not say that, for I have about made up my mind to believe the Scriptures regardless of what other people or churches, or the world think and teach, for "I would rather be right than to be president." There is now one subject upon which I wish to ask a few questions. I shall not ask them for the sake of controversy, but alone for the sake of arriving at the truth as it is in Jesus.

1. Can inherent immortality of the soul be proven by the Scriptures? If it can, why does Paul write as he does? Hear him. He says, that God has saved us according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Jesus Christ. 2 Tim. 1:8-10. "But is now manifest in the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." 2 Tim. 1:10. It is plain from other Scriptures that Christ brought life into the world, for he is "the resurrection and the Life." And now I ask, is not the influence strong, that he brought immortality with life?

Again, Paul in speaking of "the blessed and only Potentate the King of kings and Lord of lords," says, "Who only hath immortality." 1 Tim. 6:17. Now if this be literally true, ask, must we not get immortality from the "only" source of im-

mortality, to wit "the King of kings and Lord of lords," "our Saviour Jesus Christ?"

Again, Paul still follows up the same theme and breaks forth into these words, "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God" etc. 1 Tim. 1:17. Now Paul says he is the "only wise" and we know that he is the only "invisible," and the only "eternal," and why not the only immortal? I ask. The terms all seem to be peculiar to the Lord, but if man is immortal, that one term is not peculiar, and if there is one exception, why not more?

Once more, Paul in Rom. 2:7 says, "seeking for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life." Now I ask, if the soul is immortal why does Paul use the term immortal? In the preceding verse he says of God, He "will render to every man according to his deeds. To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, honor" etc., shall be rewarded for his deeds, and it seems that the seeking for "glory" and "honor," is what qualifies for the reward. It is plain according to the Scriptures that we must seek for glory. It is just as plain that we must seek for honor—before God—nobody denies that we must seek for, if we wish to obtain eternal life. And is not immortality classed in the same category, and must not we obtain it the same way that we obtain eternal life?

Now is it not reasonable, that as we must obtain "eternal life," through Christ, that we must obtain immortality through him, and does not that fact prove that we have not immortality? But you say that the soul emanated from God, and hence it is immortal, inherently. Now I want to ask can an immortal thing be corrupted, polluted or made impure? You may think it can, but if it can I am exceedingly anxious to have the proof. To say that the soul is a part of God, is immortal, and can be polluted, is tantamount to saying that God can be polluted. And if it cannot be polluted why does James talk about "purifying your souls in obeying the truth?"

These Scriptures seem to be plain, and ought to be easily understood, but they are not so easily reconciled with general teaching. I do not question the immortality of the soul, but I can easily infer from Paul's teaching that it is not inherently immortal, but that immortality must be obtained from Christ is, it seems to me, the way Paul teaches. Now whether Paul knew best, or the teachers of our day is the question. I would a little rather risk old Paul in the matter I have about come to think. And I cannot see what could be lost by believing that we must get immortality through Christ, as well as "eternal life," indeed that is just what we get when we get "eternal life, is immortality." I am aware that to accept this idea of things, would call in question the validity of some other notions, but what need any one to care? If they are wrong what do we want to hold them for? God's truth will stand—our notions to the contrary notwithstanding.

If this article is at variance with truth, I shall hope to be corrected by the truth barring man's opinions.

If you employ your money in doing good you put it out to the very best interest.

As the fountain finds its expression in overflowing, as a river in rushing to the infinite main, as trees bursting into life and blossom in the spring-tide, so God feels it his joy to give liberally, and to give above all we can ask or think or desire for Christ's sake.—Cumming.

There is much truth in the little paragraph we find in the Arkansas Methodist, and no church is without just such members as are plainly described in it.

"One brother reported that he was taking more papers than he could read, but upon investigation we found that he was taking no Church paper. He claims to be a Methodist, his wife is a Methodist, and they want their children to be, but they are too poor to take a religious paper, but fully able to take six secular ones with a daily thrown in that never fails to thrust at morality and uphold crime. Is not that a fine type of piety? How can such people expect their children to be religious? Our preachers should be diligent to put the paper in all such homes. They really need it."